BOARD OF FUNERAL SERVICES
ANNUAL REPORT

1981

BOARD OF FUNERAL SERVICES

THE FUNERAL SERVICES ACT OF ONTARIO
APPOINTED UNDER THE ONTARIO MINISTRY OF HEALTH

OFFICE OF THE
REGISTRAR

416 / 921-5164

1ST FLOOR
25 GROSVENOR STREET
TORONTO, ONTARIO
M4Y 1A9

June 30, 1982.

The Honourable Larry Grossman,
MINISTER OF HEALTH

Sir:

I have the honour to submit for your approval the fourth Annual Report of the Board of Funeral Services for the period ending December 31, 1981.

Yours sincerely,

Donald B. Steenson,
REGISTRAR.

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ANNUAL REPORT - 1981

INTRODUCTION:

This is the fourth report of the Board of Funeral Services to the Minister of Health as required by Section 2(8) of the Funeral Services Act. This report covers the Board's activities in the calendar year 1981.

BOARD STAFF

Donald B. Steenson, F.B.I.E.
Registrar.

L. Eileen Greer,
Secretary.

LEGAL COUNSEL

Barry B. Swadron, Q.C.

BOARD MEMBERSHIP:

The Board is established by the Funeral Services Act which was proclaimed on December 5, 1977 and is composed of five funeral directors (one of whom does not direct the operation of a Funeral Service Establishment) and three persons who are not licenced under the Funeral Services Act.

MEMBERS:

Eric F. Nicholls, Chairman	Wallaceburg
Barry Brownlee, Vice Chairman	Finch
Edith MacIntosh, Treasurer	Kitchener
Kenneth Bagnell	Whitby
Michael Benjamin	Toronto
Everett Coates	Brampton
Agnew Johnston, D.D.	Thunder Bay
Gerry Lougheed Jr.	Sudbury

FUNCTIONS:

The Funeral Services Act establishes a self-governing board and the functions of the Board are:

a) to regulate the practices of funeral directors in accordance with this Act and the regulations;

b) to regulate funeral service establishments in accordance with this Act and the regulations;

c) to establish, maintain and develop standards of knowledge and skill among funeral directors;

d) to establish, maintain and develop standards of qualification and practice for the practice of funeral directors;

e) to establish, maintain and develop standards of qualification for funeral service establishments;

f) to establish, maintain and develop standards of professional ethics among funeral directors and funeral services establishment licensees;

g) to administer this Act and perform such other duties and exercise such other powers as are imposed or conferred on the Board by or under this Act or the regulations or by any other Act,

in order that the public interest may be served and protected.

The Board shall:

a) review the operation of this Act and the regulations and make recommendations to the Minister thereon;

b) approve or set course of study and examinations for the qualification of applicants for licence.

The Funeral Services Act establishes within the Board of Funeral Services:

1) A Licencing Committee: This committee, reviews the applications for In-Service Training, following their graduation from the funeral service education program at Humber College, reviews applications and submissions from licencees in other jurisdictions who are desirous of becoming licenced in Ontario and sets examinations for candidates for licensure.

2) A Complaints Committee: This committee considers and investigates complaints regarding the conduct or actions of any funeral director which have been submitted in writing to the Registrar. During 1981 this committee considered and investigated eighteen complaints.

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Of these, fourteen were adjudicated to the satisfaction of both the complainants and the funeral director. Two were forwarded to the Funeral Services Review Board at the request of the complainant and two were referred to the Discipline Committee.

3) A Discipline Committee: This committee hears and determines allegations of professional misconduct or incompetence against any funeral director, referred to it by the Complaints Committee. Five hearings were held with the following results:

ROBERT WRIGHT, Atikokan, Ontario - Charged with disgraceful and unprofessional conduct. Charges were proven and Mr. Wright was given a reprimand.

DOUGLAS UTTER, Kenora, Ontario - Charged with misuse of trust funds. Charges were proven and Mr. Utter had his licence suspended for two years, and upon re-instatement is prohibited from accepting or holding trust monies for a further eight years.

BERNARD McBRIDE, St. Williams, Ontario - Charged with misuse of trust funds. Charges were proven and Mr. McBride had his licence suspended for five years.

HAROLD MUNDY, London, Ontario - Charged with offering a payment or reward for the purpose of procuring patronage for a funeral service establishment. Charges were proven and Mr. Mundy was given a reprimand.

A licenced funeral director was charged with permitting an unlicenced person to engage in the practice of funeral directing. Charges were not proven to the satisfaction of the Committee, and the licensee was found Not-Guilty.

In accordance with Section 6(7) of the Funeral Services Act, the Registrar cancelled the licences of five funeral directors for non-payment of annual fees.

The inspection of funeral service establishments continues on a regular basis. These inspections cover the premises, equipment and facilities as well as the books and records pertaining to pre-paid funerals, and indicate that both the Funeral Services Act and the Pre-arranged Funeral Services Act are being complied with and it would appear that the funeral purchasing public are being adequately served. A recent public survey conducted by an independent organization indicated that 70% of those surveyed expressed excellent or satisfactory opinions of the funeral director of their choice.

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OBSERVATIONS:

The Board met for a total of twelve days during 1981 and in accordance with Section 5 of the Regulations under the Funeral Services Act, conducted a continuing education course attended by approximately 225 licenced funeral directors. The course covered a wide variety of subjects such as "Death, Dying and Social Change", "The Funeral Director: His Family and His Community", "Public Health Practices - A Reasonable Expectation of Funeral Service Practitioners" and embalming, restorative art, funeral management and the cardio-pulmonary resuscitation.

The Board is attempting to continually change and upgrade the course content to the continuing education course in an attempt to keep funeral directors informed on the various attitudes toward death, dying, bereavement and social change.

The Board is aware of certain matters needing review under the Pre-arranged Funeral Services Act and Regulations and the Legislative Committee appointed by the Board has tabled their report of this review. The Board of Funeral Services expect to approach the Ministry responsible for this Act with a view to requesting certain amendments which would allow the Board to set up and administer a Compensation Fund. This fund could be used to compensate prepaid clients should an Ontario funeral director misuse or mis-appropriate all or part of his trust funds.

This report, as those of previous years, indicates that the Board of Funeral Services and the various committees, has had a very active year. The members feel that the objects of the Board are being fulfilled and that the public interest is both being served and protected.